

	USE OF SPEED LIMIT TRANSITION ZONES		<i>Issued: NOV 2007</i>
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RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	PART	TRAFFIC OPERATIONS	
	SECTION		
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General

Transition speed zones are comprised of a short section of roadway posted with a speed limit lower than typical rural highway speeds in order to facilitate a transition between rural highway and urban roadway with a much lower speed limit.

Standard

Transition speed zones may be considered when a roadway speed reduction of more than 40 km/h is being contemplated (i.e., from rural highway speeds into urban areas).

Transition speed zones may be considered for speed reductions of less than 40 km/h if a field assessment has determined that a transition speed zone may improve safety or traffic operations.

When evaluating the desirability of a speed limit transition zone, the following need to be considered:

- Roadway operating speeds in advance of speed reduction
- Existing operational/safety issues (i.e., due to speed differential between vehicles, speed exceeding that suitable for the roadway environment)
- History of overly aggressive braking at the entrance to the reduced speed limit area
- Low speed limit compliance in the lower speed limit area

- Expected compliance with a transition speed zone (i.e., will motorists perceive it to be justified by the surrounding roadway environment, roadway geometrics, and traffic conditions?)

Transition speed limit values are typically set to divide the desired speed reduction approximately in half. For instance, if a speed limit decrease from 100 km/h to 50 km/h is desired, a transition speed limit of 70 km/h or 80 km/h would be appropriate.

It is desirable to have a minimum transition speed zone length of 400 metres. This allows for the placement of reduced speed ahead signs (150 to 250 metres in advance of each speed reduction) and a sufficient speed zone length to achieve compliance.

When considering appropriate speed limits, particularly speed reductions, it is important to understand that speed limit compliance issues may arise if the speed reduction seems unjustified (in the opinion of drivers) due to the rural nature of the roadway cross-section.

References to Standards

<i>Recommended Practices, Internal Processes</i>	Ministerial Order Flow Process for Speed Limit Amendments
<i>Recommended Practices, Regulatory Signs</i>	Maximum Speed Ahead Sign